

Marketing Communication in Libraries: Observations of German Research Libraries

Dr. Umit Konya, Assit. Prof.

Istanbul University Faculty of Letters Department of Information and Document Management

Abstract. Libraries and librarians have had to adapt to the growth of information technology in recent years; therefore, organizations that offer information services have started to vary and multiply their service forms and types. This change forced information and documentation experts to work on meeting their user requirements and demands. For this reason, libraries have begun to use marketing techniques in their applications recently. It became possible to determine and product the needed services in the optimal level with the marketing. In this study, only the marketing communication/promotion from the marketing mix applications is analyzed, and the marketing communication practices of German research libraries, Deutsche Bibliothek in Leipzig, Staatsbibliothek, Library of the Technical University, and Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum in Berlin, are tried to be explained.

Keywords: Library marketing, Marketing communications in libraries, Library marketing, Library promotion, Marketing communication mix, Deutsche Bibliothek Marketing Communication, Staatsbibliothek marketing communication, Library of the Berlin Technical University marketing communication, Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum marketing communication

1. Introduction

Marketing is the process of planning and executing of “development”, “pricing”, “promotion”, and “distribution” of products, services, and ideas to create exchanges that satisfy organizational objectives. The concept of marketing came on the agenda for libraries especially in 1980s, and in this sense it is obvious to observe that academic libraries performed a big role in developing marketing services for their libraries (Gupta, 2006).

Marketing helps to identify which goods or services, in what extent, where and when are needed; it provides guidance to production. The goal of marketing

Received: 1.5.2012 / Accepted: 20.9.2012
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ISSN 2241-1925



effort for organizations is to create a marketing mix. Marketing mix is known as 4P's too: Product, Price, Promotion (marketing communication), and Place. Also, in recent years people, physical facilities, and process management are added to 4P's (known as 7P's).

Research methods are used for the determination of the marketing mix. These methods are market research and marketing research techniques. Market research is a type of method that will help organizations get to know the market that their goods and services will be launched. Marketing research is more comprehensive and it consists of financial, administrative, etc. topics. As a result of these research, goods or services that will be presented in the market and marketing strategy will be determined.

Educational activities and obtained knowledge for marketing services have positive impact on library staff to develop their communication skills, mostly established in dialogues with the users, and it is possible to see that all these things increase the interest to marketing services in libraries. In this respect, managers responsible for public libraries and other librarians who are educated or attended a workshop especially in this subject are commonly have positive perspectives about marketing phenomenon (Singh, 2005). Promotion, one of the marketing mix's components, is also expressed as "marketing communication". In this study, features and components of marketing communication are explained and applications conducted in some German research libraries are observed.

2. Marketing Communication/ Promotion

Marketing communication is advertising, public dissemination, direct mailing, exhibition, and sales promotion activities that doesn't require face to face engagement with the target group (Singh, 2004). In another aspect, marketing communication in general is a communication type that lead potential customers to the decision and action point when they don't have any information about the service or product (Karakas, 2007). Marketing communication goes through awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption processes.

Marketing communication is the 'promotion' part of the marketing mix is a consciously programmed and applied coordinated communication process, conducted under the supervision of producer-marketer, that is prepared in order to persuade customer/user and facilitate the sale of goods or services. This process can be defined as a regular dialogue that occurs between organization and consumer/user. Marketing communication mix consists of different components:

Advertising: Any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services, that has an identified sponsor, and it is applied through

mass media in order to draw public attention. It has got three functions: to inform, to persuade, and to remind.

Personal Selling: A direct contact with the identified target consumers /users. Does not applied to wide audience.

Sales Promotion: Contrary to the personal selling, it targets groups. Advertising tries to create a reason for purchasing; however, sales promotion tries to create purchasing impulses. Instead of broad masses, it aims on small, selected, and specific audience. Types of sales promotions are coupons, cash discounts, gifts-added products, sample products, contests and lotteries, product demonstrations, display materials, and etc.

Public Relations: After evaluating publics' (target audience) attitude toward a person or organization, monitoring strategies and policies that will build up good corporate image in public. Public relations are not only a marketing communication tool, but also a business function in the framework of its increasing importance in recent years. Public relations have close relationship with marketing activities.

Functions of components of marketing communication mix are given in the table 1 below.

In addition, following components may also be accepted as the components of marketing communication: (Odabas, 2009)

Direct Marketing: A marketing communication that use one or more advertising media tools in order to effect a response that is measurable in any place or a commercial operation.

Internet Marketing: Using internet or digital technologies about internet in order to fulfill marketing goals or to support modern marketing aspect.

Sponsorship: A commercial investment for organization or marketing purposes that doesn't require to buy the media channels directly for the reasons and events.

Brand Management and Brand Placement: According to American Marketing Association brand management and brand placement is 'a name, sign, symbol, design, shape, or components of all these, that provides a product or a group of vendors' products or services to be determined, identified, and distinguished from the competing products or services'.

Purpose Related Marketing: Organization to process its support to a social subject, case or idea in their marketing messages, and to relate some portion of the revenue, that have gotten from this process, to the party that put this social subject, case or idea into a practice.

Trade Fairs and Exhibitions: Fairs organized to present the products or services to the public or related people are important marketing communication tools for organizations. An institution stand in an international or national fair provides organization to present themselves to their target group and give a chance to communicate with millions of people who visit the fair.

TABLE 1. Marketing communication Mix components

Marketing Communication	Tools	Application	Advantages	Weaknesses
Advertising	Written Visual and audio ads Brochures and catalogs Posters and banners Outdoor adds Displays in the sales area	mass	Reaches many people at the same time Gives effective and permanent messages	Carry very high costs Very hard to measure its effectiveness
Personal Sale	Product launches Sales meetings Meetings, incentive to buy Sample product distributions Fairs and exhibitions	Face to face	The chance to give quick feedback To be very convincing Selection of customers Conveys complex information	High cost per customer Message is given by the sales personnel Difficulty in managing the sales staff
Sales promotion	Competition. games, lottery and sweepstakes Premiums and gifts Sample product distributions, Impressions Coupons, Events	mass	It can lead to a behavioral change in a short time Gives opportunity to apply very flexibly	Can be exploited Can be converted to promotion offensive competition Easy to be imitated
Public Relations	Press releases Publications, reports Sponsorship special programs lobbying	Mass	It can help build up a good image Give confidence to the consumers in the extent of the contribution to the social events	Difficulty in reaching the media tools Can be very difficult to distinguish the message from too many of others

3. Purpose of the Research and Applied Method

Marketing communication, that is an important marketing subject area for both organizations that manufacture products or organizations that provide services, has recently started to gain importance in libraries. The purpose of this research is to observe marketing communication applications in research libraries, that are started to be applied more.

In Germany, which has one of the best libraries that apply marketing communication best in the world, there is a research conducted about this subject area. The target group, research libraries in Germany, was chosen

randomly except the German National Library. Research center was chosen as Berlin (population is 3.500.000) because it is hosting many libraries (10.584 public libraries, 200 million visitors, annually).

In the research, face to face interview method was used, the questions were asked and detailed answers were gotten. The results obtained from this study is shown in the Table 2.

Professional Working Visit Scholarship was provided from Ulrike Lang, Bibliothek & Information International (Vorsitzende c/o Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg) in the support of İstanbul Goethe Institute, for the survey of service promotion works/marketing communication in research libraries. Marketing communication applications and functions of promotional activities in research libraries in Germany were observed between 21st-30th July 2005 in the scope of this scholarship.

The libraries that were visited are listed below:

Deutsche Bibliothek in Leipzig <http://vmw.ddb.de/>

Staatsbibliothek, in Berlin <http://vwww.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de>

Library of the Technical University in Berlin <http://www.ub.tu-berlin.de/>

Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum in Berlin <http://apel.rz.hu-berlin.de/Zope/esz/>

4. Analysis of Data

The data sets of marketing communication/promotion activity information that are acquired from the library managers and experts are compared with marketing communication mix components, and the resulting data are shown in the table below.

As it is seen below in the Table 2, even though German National Library takes place in three different cities, there is an effective marketing communication studies because of the close communication established between the units. Especially the libraries in Frankfurt and Leipzig, that have 18 million books, do user research and marketing research. The fitness center, built for national library employees, gives a different message to the users. There are intensive marketing communication practices applied, for examples are conferences, panels, exhibitions, etc. in these libraries.

Public relations unit in Staatsbibliothek leads the marketing communication activities. Especially in Berlin, they are very active in order to satisfy their 860.000 foreign users' (180.000 of them are Turkish) requirements or demands. If there are any events or activities in the library, they inform their users through the media.

Library of the Technical University has Volkswagen as its important sponsor source. Ergonomic desks in the library show how they care about their users.

Also in Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum, there is a robot working as an employee in the library and it takes users' attention. In addition to this, it is open to public. The library serves to its users free.

TABLE 2. Marketing Communication in Research Libraries Applications-
German Research Libraries

LIBRARY	MARKETING COMMUNICATION/PROMOTION MIX
Deutsche Bibliothek	National Library dispersed in three different cities geographically: Frankfurt am Main, Berlin (German Music Archive), and . Leipzig There are individuals responsible for public relations in libraries In Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig libraries, they benefit from audio-visual promotion materials and sell CD, brochures, books and etc. materials. Because Leipzig building has a historical structure, the warehouse building was built next to the main building in order to solve its storage problem. There is a tunnel in the 3 rd floor that connects the storage with the main building. When there is a book request, this unit response to demand very quickly with the rail system that is established in the storage. Leipzig and Frankfurt Libraries have got many books (approximately 18 million). Users may use the library by getting tickets from the machines in the entrance. In the sales promotion activities, library sometimes gives bookends, postcards etc. materials. Also, there are public relations events: conferences, panels, exhibitions, and etc. There are meeting and exhibition halls. The library has a big potential of users, and it is used a lot through the whole year.
Staatsbibliothek	Library has got a public relations unit. This unit manages all the promotion activities of the library. The library takes advantage of being located in a touristic area. There is a kiosks in the entrance of the library that gives information about the library and its services to their users. Demonstrations of the services, that library has produced, are informed to users by brochures prepared for each unit in the library. Sales of CD, book, calendar, etc. are made in a separate office. Library users have to pay before they use the library. Library is one of the oldest libraries of Germany, so it has got many different kinds of materials as well as number of the materials are many. Therefore, it has a high demand though the whole year. There are many experts working in the library according to user requirements. In the personal sales activities, experts do promotion of databases in certain days and hours, and participation to these events are intense. If there is a special event in the library, users are informed by the media.
Library of the Technical University	This building is constructed in the center of Berlin with a modern style. It has high demands especially during the academic year. Reference tables for the users draw attention. There are reference tables in each floors. Tables can be adjusted for the handicapped users; moreover, it shows how sensitive the library is about meeting the user demands and requirements. The library has Volkswagen in its title because when the building was constructed Volkswagen was sponsoring it. It is a very nice sponsorship example. The users can benefit from internet and computers. Library user guide brochures, exhibitions, displays, meetings, and etc. events are held regularly.
Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum	Erwin Schodinger Zentrum is a university library. It has a robot works for the library which is a good way to impact users. This robot works very silently, and it helps to deliver books all around the building. The library is free and open to all kinds of users. Local people also provide services from the library, but there aren't any special services for them. It is located in the technology center; therefore, library takes good advantages of this situation. There are 300 computers for users and free internet use. There are brochures, meetings (with satellite), exhibitions, and etc. events that are organized for the services. It is possible to find subject specialists in the library. There aren't too many users using the library out of the academic year.

5. Conclusion

Research libraries have the goal of providing access to accurate information and document as soon as possible. Therefore, use of marketing tools is fatal for the research libraries. The right user communication depends on choosing the accurate marketing communication components.

Library services will reach their users easily when they use advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations which are components of the marketing communication mix. The marketing communication mix, composed of mentioned components, will positively influence users and help build up a positive image and prestige in public.

It's seen that Deutsche Bibliothek, Staatsbibliothek, Library of the Technical University, and Erwin Schrödinger Zentrum libraries, library services promotion activities that the users needed were solved by using marketing communication (promotion) tools of marketing mix. Libraries used variety of ways to get in touch and communicate with their users. Also, it's appeared to be an important research that libraries evaluated their materials before they had presented them to their users. The fact of them benefiting from the information technologies in the maximum level shows that their services are meeting with the user requirements and demands.

When the other components of marketing communication techniques, direct marketing, internet marketing, sponsorship, brand management and brand placement, purpose related marketing, and trade fairs and exhibitions, are used effectively, it will help develop services and make them more efficient for all types of libraries. It seems that digital format will carry marketing communication into a different level for users and libraries because of its pace and flexibility.

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